

ARCHITECTURE

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PLATES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

Assembly Hall, - - - - -	Plate LII
Interior, - - - - -	Plate LIII

Geo. B. Post, Architect.

BROOKLYN INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, Brooklyn.

Exterior, - - - - -	Plate LIV
Main Entrance, - - - - -	Plate LVI
Rotunda, Top Floor, - - - - -	Plate LVII
Foyer, - - - - -	Plate LVIII

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

EXTENSION TO MASONIC HALL, New York.

Perspective, - - - - -	108
Detail, Front Elevation, - - - - -	Double Plate LV

H. P. Knowles, Architect.

ARCHITECTS OF TO-DAY.

MR. WM. A. BORING, New York, - - -	106
MR. EDW. L. TILTON, New York, - - -	106

SCHENECTADY COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

Accepted Design and Plans, - - - - -	110
Competitive Design and Plans, - - - - -	111

Stoddart & Weathers, Architects.

L. Rodman Nichols and Clark Howe & Homer, Asso. Architects.

COUNTRY HOUSE, R. T. Wainwright, Rye, N. Y., - - -

James Pickles, Architect.

BUILDING DETAILS, - - - - -

Drawn by Frank M. Snyder, Architect.

STAMFORD NATIONAL BANK, Stamford, Conn., - - -

Gordon, Tracy & Swarrwout, Architects.

THE BATES COTTAGE, Wyoming, N. J., - - - - -

J. Wheeler Dow, Architect.

THE FISH RESIDENCE, Brookline, Mass., - - - - -

Winslow & Bigelow, Architects.

THE CLAPP RESIDENCE, Dedham, Mass., - - - - -

F. C. Brown, Architect.

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PROFESSIONAL COMMENT.

IT does not take a very long memory to recall that but a few years ago one of the numerous efforts to license architects in the State of New York was defeated through the efforts of a number of prominent men in the profession, who claimed that architecture was purely an art, that architects were artists; and that an art should not be regulated. Upon this premise the Governor accepted the decision of these gentlemen and the bill failed.

For some years a large amount of the agitation for the restriction in height of buildings in New York has been fostered by the architectural profession. The public naturally assumed that these gentlemen being purely artists, upon their own statement at least, desired above all things that these leviathans should be restricted for æsthetic reasons, but in addition the architect usually took high ground in arguing against unrestricted building on account of the danger from fire and congestion. Restriction was then a theory. The propositions made in the report of the Building Code Commission of New York last December, took this question out of the academical class and made it a practical one, and the architect is now asked to decide which will be the better for the city; a restriction based upon lines which have made Continental Europe beautiful or one based upon rules and regulations which will allow a city of inordinate height. Based upon the ideas of the profession as expressed for many years back, the public would have a right to expect æsthetic considerations to be considered as paramount, but the actual situation seems to be that when the large practitioner is faced with the possibility of securing no further commissions for many storied structures that he promptly changes front and looks upon a definite restriction as something injurious to property rights.

In a recent symposium in the *New York Times*, in which many of the prominent architects of skyscrapers were interviewed, but one man, fortunately the president of the Architectural League, considered the question from the standpoint of æsthetics, except when they made these same æsthetic principles serve the ends, which but a few years ago they condemned in unmeasured terms. The plan for the city of towers so thoroughly advertised and promoted by the architect of one of the largest monstrosities on Manhattan Island, has now received the approval of the local Chapter



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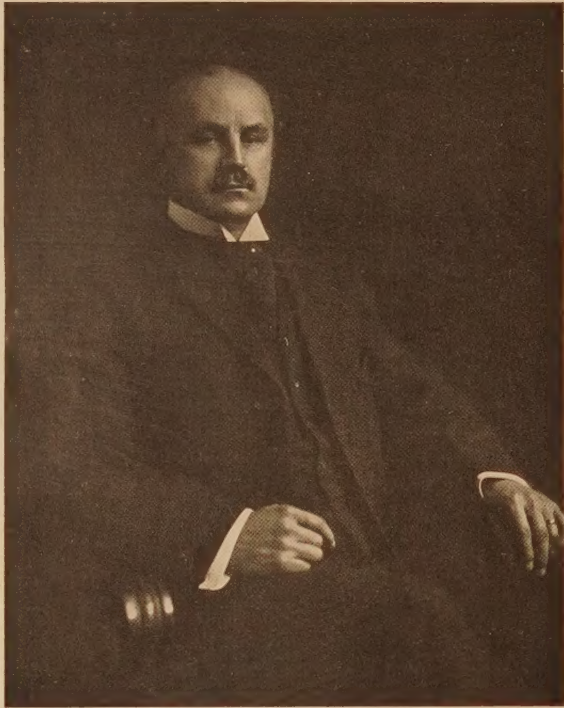
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Architects of To-day.

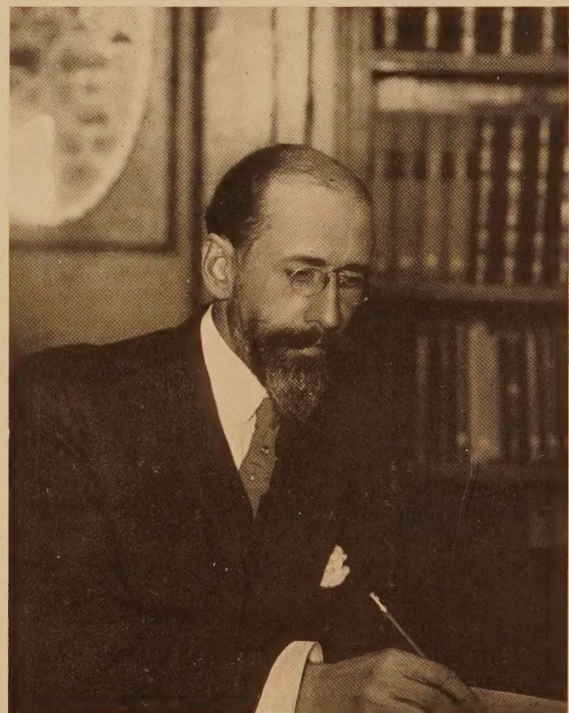
MR. WM. A. BORING, NEW YORK.

of the Institute of Architects, and notwithstanding the fact that according to an advertisement which recently came in our possession, this gentleman is both architect and general contractor in defiance of the rule to which each member of the New York Chapter has been recently asked to subscribe. It is true that we do not find this gentleman's name upon the Chapter lists, but we cannot see why the Chapter goes to a source for inspiration when that source is in violation of its own professed code of ethics.

THE American Institute of Architects must make itself alive to the business interests of the profession to a larger extent than it now does if it wishes to wield the influence due to the profession of architecture. The growth of the Society of New York Architects is chiefly due to the lack of such a stand on the part of the local Chapters. It is a purely business organization and in its formation it has simply followed in the steps of Boston, Chicago, and other western cities where business organizations of architects now thrive on account of the academical attitude of the larger society. In fact in many of the western cities the membership of these business organizations is several times larger than the total membership of the local Chapter of the A. I. A. This should not be the case and the profession is distinctly the loser by this division of effort. The tendency of government of to-day and especially of municipal government is to extend its authority to a larger and larger extent over real estate and building interests, and it is essential to the members of the architectural profession and to the clients whom they serve that they should take an active interest in the business side of their work. The experience of the local New York Chapters in the past in dabbling in political matters which effect their interests has been laughable in the extreme. As far as we have been able to find out neither the Brooklyn

nor the New York Chapter has a vigorous, live legislative committee and when they have had such committees their labors has been largely abortive through the fact that they work up to the proper amount of enthusiasm for the particular measures in which they are interested at about the time of adjournment of the legislative session. In this particular the Society of New York Architects, whether we agree with its principles or not, is doing a distinct service to the profession in a field that is neglected by the larger and presumably more dignified body.

THE Chamber of Commerce of the city of Rochester, N. Y., is a hustling corporation and it believes in its home city, but the idea that it has of the value of architects' services is not one that should attract the profession to its city, if the same reasoning is applied to workers in other fields whom it desires to attract. This august body "realizing the necessity of interesting investors in cottage houses and with the desire to care for a rapidly increasing population" has offered the "magnificent" set of prizes of \$600—divided in nine parts, for an architectural competition for three types of impossible houses. One for \$1,500, one for \$1,250, and one for \$1,000. The word impossible is used advisedly on account of the stipulation in the third paragraph of their programme, which shows that even the \$1,000 house must have all the appointments of a gentlemen's residence, and notwithstanding that the highest prize offered for the highest priced house is but \$135—the committee expect reputable architects to enter the competition and to present plans and elevations drawn to a scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ in. to the foot, two floor plans, two elevations, one section $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. scale details, a complete specification and a *bona fide* bid from a reliable builder, all for a commission far less than he would receive if the architect secured the business with a positive



Architects of To-day.

MR. EDWARD L. TILTON, NEW YORK.

promise of remuneration. There are no expert judges, and no guarantee that any of the designs will be accepted, but once having accepted the design the Chamber graciously reserves the right not only to build from them but to publish them broad-cast.

THERE is nothing new under the sun, and the suggestion made by Oliver Goldsmith that a certain piece of furniture of historic memory was a "bed by night, a chest of drawers by day," is now being put into practical and architectural shape by a furniture company in the Northwest, which has evolved an entirely new type of apartment based upon the interchangeability of its wares. For more particulars we respectfully refer the managers of the recent congestion exhibition in this city to the publication by the "Mansions Press," of Chicago, showing how the complete apartment may be evolved with a closet acting as a kitchen, a bath room, and one general room; which act as living room, dining room and chamber, and which has along one side that which is called a ventilated closet from which there protrudes a dresser and a sideboard. When the family dinner is over and the dishes side-tracked in the small kitchen and, presto, the sideboard becomes a mirror and the dresser a desk. Upon retiring the mirror unfolds into a bed and the desk into a bureau, and with a proper rearrangement of the furniture one has a bed-room, so that a one-room apartment contains all the comforts of home, plus the pleasure of moving all the furniture many times a day. According to the paper referred to, the Northwest, which is supposed to still have miles of untenanted land finds this method of living thoroughly suited to their temperament, while the landlord receives increased rents in places where such things as tenement house acts do not prevent.

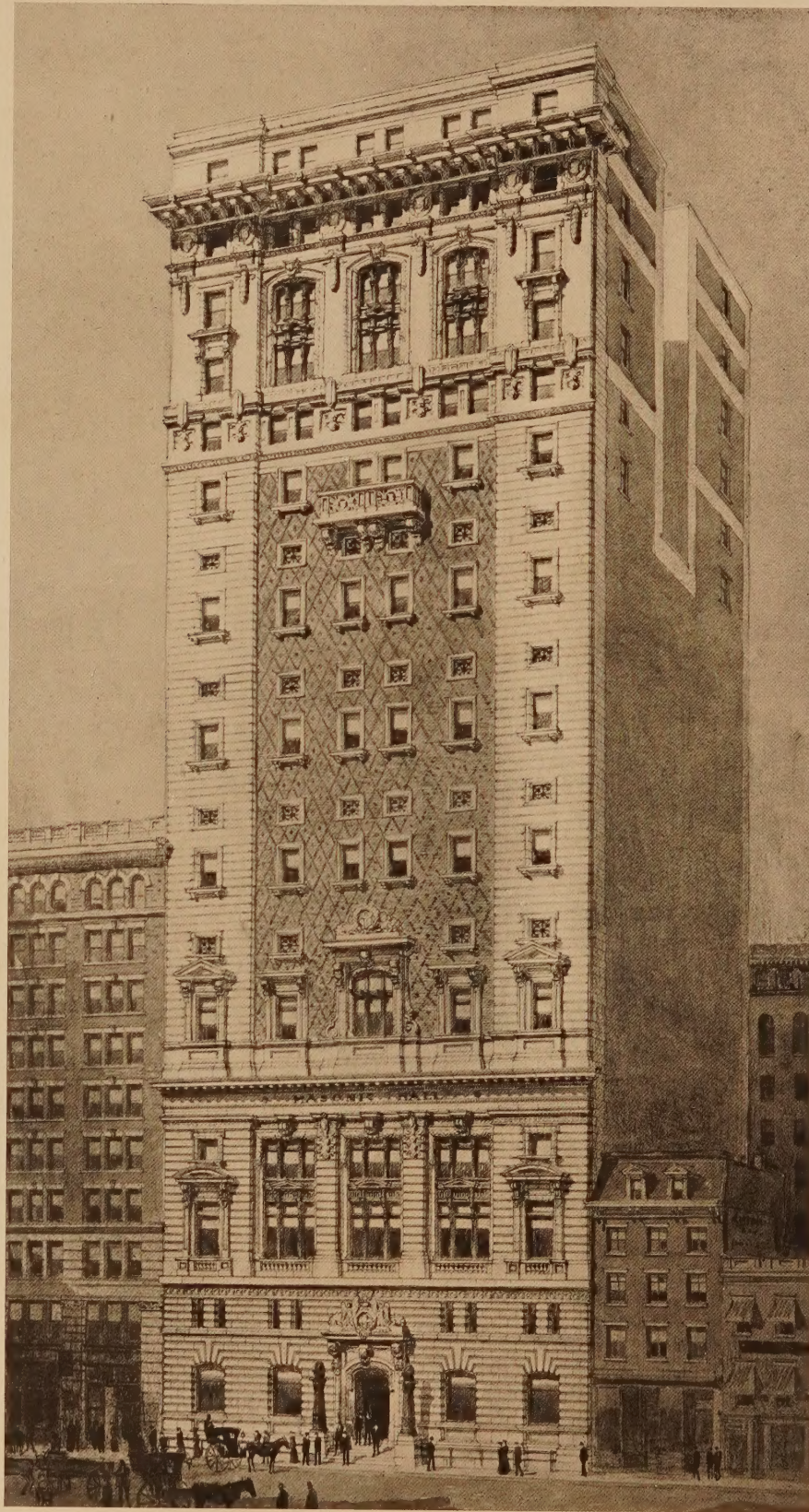
TRADE agreements are usually a good thing for the trade, but they can be carried so far as to restrict output. This is particularly the case in numerous building materials and appliances, which depend for their use upon the architects' specifications. In order to reach the architect the manufacturer bombards him with advertisements and catalogues, and in these catalogues presents to him a list of prices which everyone knows are totally mis-leading, and upon the basis of these mis-leading prices he expects to get trade through the desire of the profession to specify his goods.

The actual facts are that the trade discounts, frequently amounting to fifty per cent. of the list price, are so extensive that the architect can obtain no idea of value from the catalogues except in a comparative way, and in specifying the manufacturer's goods he does not know whether he is putting his client to a large or small expense unless he attempts to secure more exact information. We have no criticism to make of the system by which this exact information is kept in the back ground, but we do believe that when the architect makes inquiries of the manufacturer as to the price which the trade has to pay for his article, that he ought to receive it in a manner which leaves him in no doubt as to its genuineness. Under the present system he finds this very difficult and frequently impossible to obtain, and we know of many architects who have refused to specify goods because they were unable to tell whether they were subjecting their client to a large or a small outlay for the goods which he desires to use.

IF for no other reason than that George B. Post is responsible for the magnificent group of buildings which now house the College of the City of New York, we would feel that the degree of Doctor of Laws conferred upon him at the recent commencement of Columbia University was well deserved. In presenting George Brown Post for this degree Professor Hamlin said that "in an age pre-eminent for material development it was the privilege of the University to bestow its laurels upon the thinker and the interpreter of ideas. Before you stands one who for more than forty years, with untiring industry, has been interpreting his ideals of beauty into enduring structures for private and public service and civic embellishment; an engineer who is an artist, an architect whose works are masterpieces of scientific construction, and a citizen who after giving four years of his early manhood to distinguished service for the preservation of the Union has since illustrated all that is highest and best in citizenship and in his chosen art."

THE Architectural League of America announces that the date of the next Convention of the League has been fixed for September 17, 18 and 19, at Detroit, under the auspices of the Detroit Architectural Club. It is hoped that the members of the League will avail themselves of the opportunity to be present at this Convention, not only for the personal pleasure and benefits to be had by attending, but also to add to the interest and enthusiasm of the cause by giving it the sanction of their presence. This urging may seem somewhat premature, but as the inactive season of the clubs is almost at hand and the convention will be held before the clubs take up their fall work, it is opportune to bring this question to the attention of the members while they are still interested in active club work and it is sincerely hoped that they will make every effort to attend the convention at Detroit. The revised Constitution and By-Laws which was amended to meet the requirements and conditions governing Individual Membership which was established the first of the year, can be secured by applying to H. S. McAllister, Permanent Secretary, 729 15th St., Washington, D. C.

IT is the habit of the American practitioner to believe that in this country alone his profession receives scant recognition, that it is only in our speculative markets that the builder reigns supreme and that the architect has to take a back seat. It was, therefore, surprising to us, in discussing this situation with an Austrian practitioner to find that this is also the case in Vienna. In fact the Austrian congratulated us that the architects was in such more complete control in America, and that conditions were not the same as in Vienna, where long rows of buildings are erected by the speculator from one set of plans which he uses again and again, and over which the architect does not even exercise a superficial sway. Our Austrian friend also surprised us by stating that timber construction was cheaper in Austria than in America, on account of the care with which the Imperial Government has preserved its forests, but notwithstanding this fact timber floor construction is only allowed in Vienna when the entire floor is deafened at the top with concrete and covered with some fireproof material at the bottom.



PERSPECTIVE, EXTENSION TO MASONIC HALL, NEW YORK.

Wells Brothers Company of New York, Builders.

H. P. Knowles, Architect.

BUILDING FOR SPECULATION OR INVESTMENT.

J. J. COSTER.

WHEN one speaks of speculative building it usually conveys an impression of bad building. Experience points to the close connection between the two; yet it may well be doubted whether all bad building is speculative, or whether, on the other hand, all speculative building is bad. A good deal depends upon how the word "speculative" is used.

On the other side of the picture we have a common saying that "Fools build houses for wise men to live in," implying that sound building is expensive, and that those who build for investment must expect disappointment. Again, experience, to a large extent, bears this out, for there is always a germ of truth in an everyday saying. Those who build houses in a costly manner, or with anything special about them, in order to meet personal requirements or fads, frequently find when the time comes for the disposal of their houses, that they have to sell them for very much less than they cost to build. But, again, to invest money in bricks and mortar is not always a bad investment, nor are all buildings erected by private enterprise for private use unsalable at a fair price. Good architecture we all know to be costly, and those who indulge in the real thing must do so with their eyes open, knowing that architectural works of art will never fetch their worth if they are put upon the market. They can, in fact, only be properly indulged in by wealthy private individuals who desire to hand down freehold property of equally wealthy successors, who will enter into the enjoyment of possessing an artistic building with full appreciation thereof, and without the least desire to realize its cost. It is also justifiable on the part of public bodies to expend money in this way, it being their duty to provide great buildings for future generations to admire as a record of what the present time can produce; and it is even more imperative for religious bodies to act similarly; for now, as in all times past, it is the duty of all people to lavishly enrich and adorn the temples in which they worship. These things have been for all ages, and are likely to be for all ages to come.

Putting aside, however, these special classes of people who look for no return for their expenditure on architectural adornment, who do not so much invest their money as give it to the buildings which they create, it must be admitted that the general tendency of the present day is to starve architecture. A beautiful building, even if it be plain, is very costly. So even in those places where sound construction is insisted upon, and sometimes more in these than elsewhere, there is a constant cry to cut down the cost of the architectural enrichments. This is, and always has been, the cry in the architectural periods of degradation.

Yet one must admit that strict economy is essential if money is to be spent upon bricks and mortar and yet bring in a satisfactory return, whether as an investment or a speculation; and we must carefully differentiate between the two. He who speculates is generally possessed of insufficient capital to even carry through his building scheme. His object is to turn a small capital over and over as quickly as possible, and he finds it most profitable to build on leasehold land for which he pays a rental annually, and to borrow a considerable part of the sum necessary to pay for his materials and his labor. When the work is finished, his object is to sell im-

mediately, so as to realize the capital which he has invested, such as it is, pay off his mortgages, and pocket such profits as there may be; and then start afresh upon another similar building scheme, and upon precisely the same method. Here is every temptation towards bad building. He has no permanent interest in the land, which is not his own; nor is the greater part of the money his own, either, and if he can only sell his houses (for this sort of thing is generally done with regard to small property) he is soon free from all liability for repairs. Trusting to this, he can adopt the flimsiest construction which local regulations will permit. He leaves a heavy crop of difficulties to the purchaser; but that, he considers, is not his concern.

The man who builds for investment pursues a very different plan. His object is not to sell quickly and begin afresh, but to build once for all, and either to live in the house himself, or to let it out to tenants, and to treat the rent as income. As a general rule, the property dealt with in this way is of a larger type, consisting of good flats, offices, villa residences, or shops, the object being to realize a steady income from invested capital. There is still considerable inducement to build cheaply in order that as large a percentage as possible may be obtained; but, at the same time, sufficient regard may be had to the future. It thus becomes essential to build soundly in order that repairs may be avoided, and that the building may be maintained at a minimum yearly outlay, and without deterioration for a long period of years. It is also necessary, if tenants are to be obtained, that the arrangements should be convenient, and that the architecture, if not extravagant, should at any rate be pleasing. Thus there is all the difference in the world between the speculator who builds for the present moment only, and the investor who cares quite as much, and, perhaps, more, for the future, aiming at a fair return for his capital at the present time, and hoping for a better return in years to come; for there is again this further difference between the two classes—that the speculator chooses only a district where buildings of the description which he is thinking of putting up are likely to sell at present; whereas the investor takes a great deal of trouble to select a site which has, he thinks, a future before it—where, in fact, his buildings are likely to improve rather than deteriorate in value.

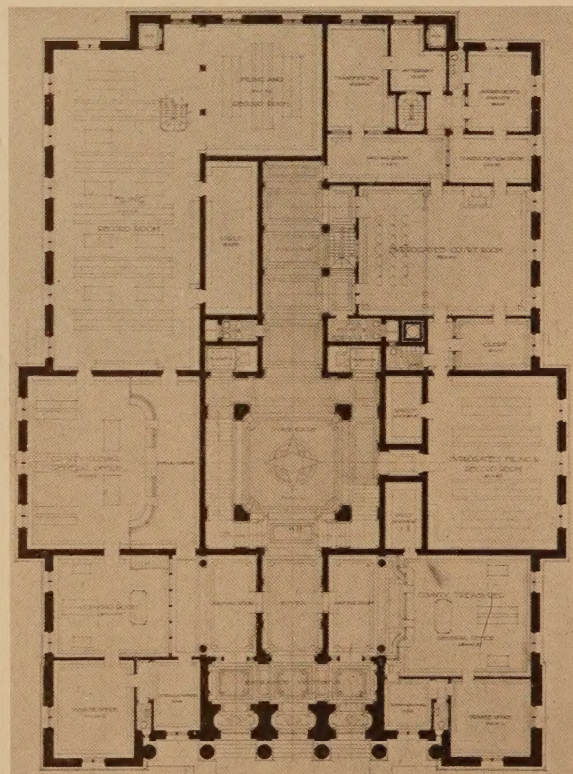
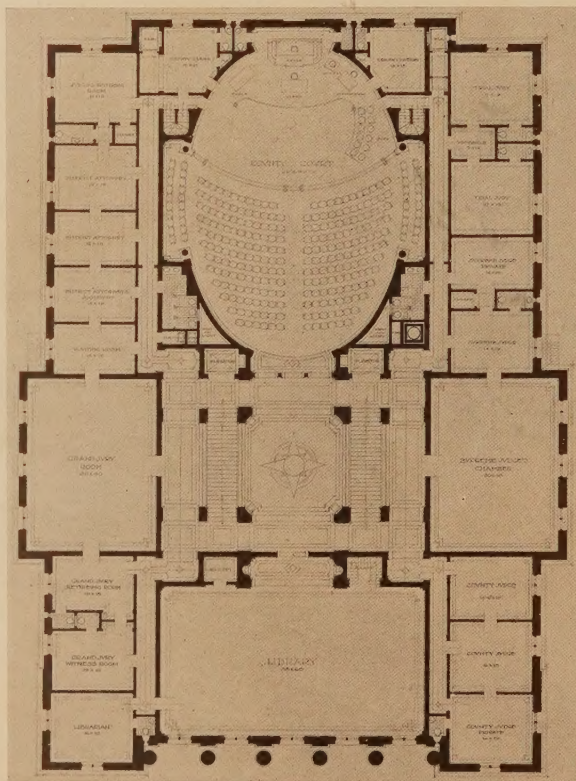
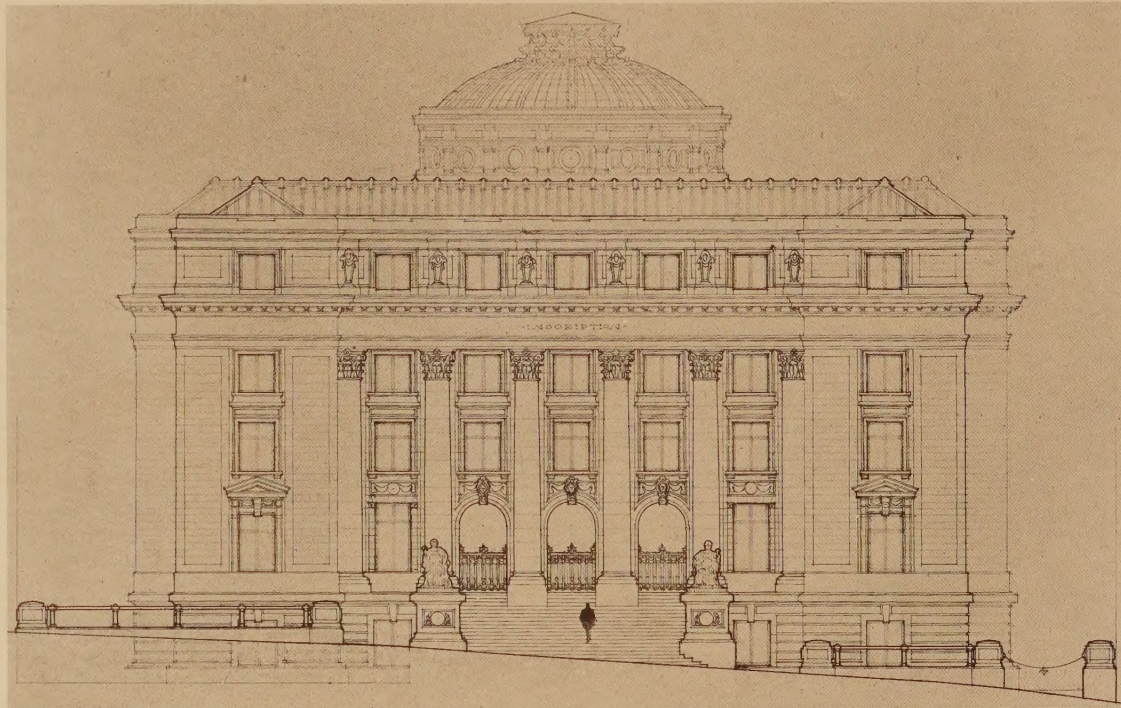
From the point of view of the architect, both as a man who has to earn his living by practicing his art and as one who loves it, and, consequently, cherishes a desire for its advancement and its permanence; the investor is one to be encouraged, and the speculator one to be condemned.

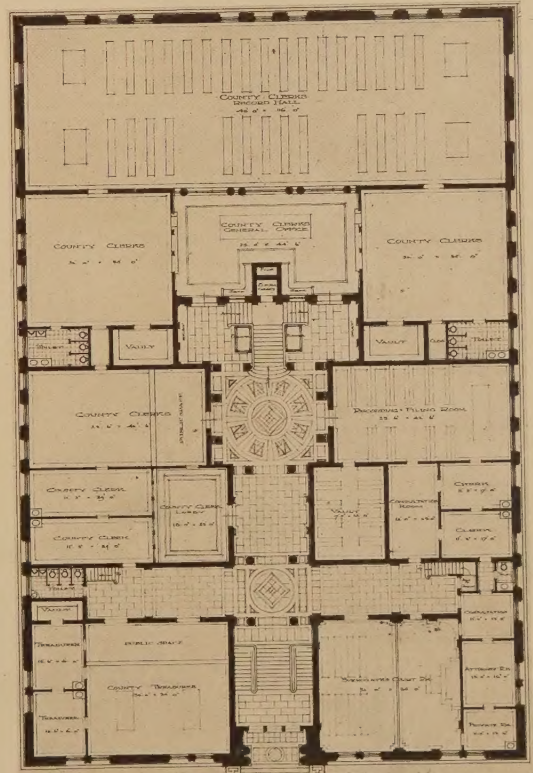
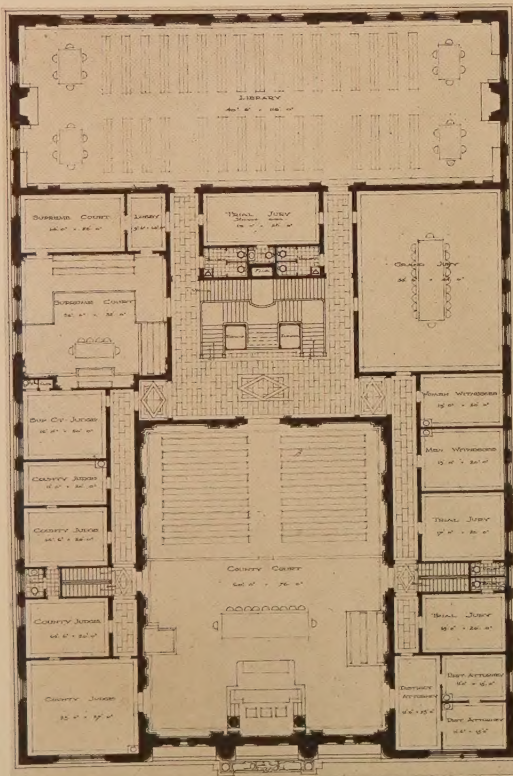
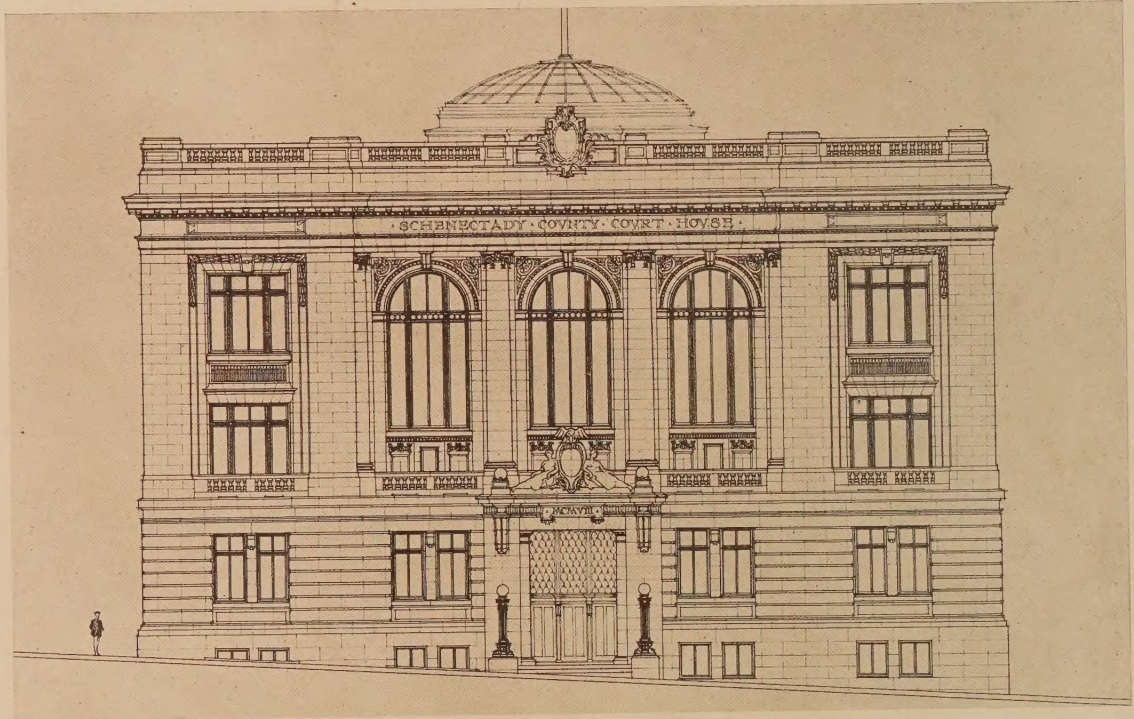
ARCHITECTS' RESPONSIBILITIES.

SIDNEY WARREN.

IT is a recognized axiom of common law that every man is responsible for the satisfactory performance of that which he undertakes to do. We all know very well that if a solicitor neglects the interests of his clients, either deliberately or through ignorance, he can be brought to book and very seriously mulcted in damages, with the consequent loss of the professional reputation which this entails. Doctors are similarly liable, and so are the members of the open professions and callings. A dispenser, whether he be a qualified chemist or not, must dispense accurately. If he should happen to introduce a poison accidentally into a tonic, he is open to the charge of manslaughter. Even the poorly-

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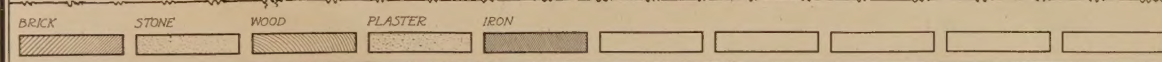


COMPETITIVE DESIGN AND PLANS, SCHENECTADY COUNTY COURT HOUSE, SCHENECTADY, N. Y.
L. Rodman Nichols and Clark, Howe & Homer, Asso. Architects.



COUNTRY HOUSE, R. T. WAINWRIGHT, RYE, N. Y.

James Pickles, Architect. Whitney-Steen Co., Builders, 135 Broadway, New York.



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(Continued from page 109)

paid railway signalman, guard, or engine-driver, when he takes charge of his cabin or engine, at the same time takes upon his shoulders the full responsibility of seeing that his duties are properly discharged, and again and again neglect has been visited upon him with considerable severity. It thus naturally follows that an architect has, like all other men, to take his risks. When a commission is placed into his hands, there is an implied understanding that he is competent to carry out the work, and to look after his client's interests in all reasonable respects. He is at liberty, in all probability, to put up as hideous a building as he likes, provided that his client gives him a free hand, or approves of his design. So far he stands in the same category as any other artist; and, if architects were to limit themselves to the preparation of drawings, leaving the whole responsibility for the execution of their work to others, they would be free from blame if anything went wrong. That such a division of labor is possible is fairly well recognized by the Scale of Charges, which provides for a certain payment on the completion of the drawings and specification and the signing of the contract. At this stage it would be competent for any architect to withdraw, and to say that somebody else must be employed for the purposes of supervision. No architect with grit in him, however, ever does this. It is rightly argued that the architect, unless he has the control to the very completion of his contract, cannot be sure that his ideas are faithfully represented in the resulting building, and that consequently he must supervise from beginning to end. As a general rule, the amount of personal supervision is not great, particularly when the architect's practice is a large one, and clerks of works are employed. But the responsibility for it remains, and although the clerk of work may be paid by the client independently, and may himself be liable for personal neglect, yet the onus of seeing that everything is as it ought to be rests with the architect, and the architect alone. It is, in fact, impossible to imagine that it could be otherwise, without a complete change in the general custom regarding the execution of building works. There may be amongst us a certain number—we hope very few—who prefer to shirk their responsibilities, and to remain designers only; but, undoubtedly, most architects are not only willing, but anxious, to see their buildings through from start to finish, and to keep the control over the builder in their own hands. Still, we are not all made alike, and there may very well be some who are not fitted to be both designers and supervisors. For such we would suggest that their proper course would be to form partnerships with others who are more suited to supervise than to design. Failing this, apparently the only thing to be done is for such architects to enter into a special contract with their clients, by which they would be paid a lower fee than the usual five per cent., and be absolved from all responsibility, the work of supervision being then placed in the hands of some other person. We do not throw this suggestion out as being at all a desirable one for adoption, but rather the other way, as showing what is practically the only alternative to the continuance of the present system, which, with all its accompanying risks, goes far to lift the architect above the artist, making him a fighting unit in the world's army of men, and not a mere dilettante and idealist.

SKILL RUNNING TO WASTE.

S. S. SWIFT.

“TO what purpose is this waste?” is a question that naturally suggests itself as one tries to reckon up the net gain that has accrued to the world from some great competition. Perhaps the competitors in the preliminary trial are not much to be pitied. If they got no further than that, the presumption is that they are more or less in the apprentice stage: and apprentices everywhere have to learn by failure. But what of the schemes which showed enough merit to give them a place in the final contest, with its protracted drudgery and its ultimate disappointment? Some of them, perhaps (we are not referring to any particular competition, either recent or remote), showed little less ability than the victorious ones; and many of them, in all likelihood, displayed power that we cannot wisely throw away. Yet what reward have these authors received, and how much richer is the nation for all the thought and invention which the ten or twenty selected competitors have freely laid at its feet? The melancholy answer is, Nothing at all. We do not raise the question whether the chosen design is really the best; whether it is so transcendently superior to each of the unchosen ones that its author deserves something like a fortune, while their authors get their deserts by being pushed one more stage down the slope that leads to ruin. Sometimes it is so, perhaps, and sometimes not, though we wonder in how many cases a different assessor or a different body of assessors would have made a different choice; and we wonder, too, how many of the schemes submitted in the second contest were so hopelessly bad that their makers proved unworthy to have any part or lot in the matter. For the point we are now trying to raise is this: whether the country really acts wisely when it rejects nineteen-twentieths of the architectural skill which is offered to it, and gives all the praise, and all the pudding, too, to the remaining twentieth part.

But “How can it do otherwise?” will be the natural reply. “How can it take a bit of one design and a bit of another, or, if you like, of twenty others, and mix them all up into a composite building, which shall be everybody's, and yet nobody's in particular?” That, however, is not the suggestion. That is an idea which has repeatedly been tried, and which, naturally, has failed. The possibility, if there is one, lies further back. The preliminary competition, say, has brought to light a number of capable architects who have given their minds to the subject, and with some success. The building we are assuring is a large one—too large to be properly thought out in every part by any individual. Much of it will inevitably have to be designed less by the nominal architect than by his servants—by his clerks, assistants, “ghosts,” or whatever you like to call them. They will take the great man's ideas, of which, like the rest of us, he probably has none too many, and will mechanically repeat them, or beat them out thinner and thinner till, by diligent labor, they have made them go as far as the size of the building requires. Then, as people pass it, they will say, “This is a good general composition. What a pity all the details are not equally good! We know that the architect can do better things than this; but so vast a place is more than one man can manage. Life is too short, and work has to be done nowadays at too fast a pace.”

That is meant to be a fair comment, though it would

(Continued page 117)



THE BATES COTTAGE, WYOMING, N. E.

J. Wheeler Dow, Architect.

(Continued from page 115)

be invidious to name any of the great buildings to which it applies. And for fear of a misunderstanding, we must point out again that it is only of great buildings that we are now speaking—great in size if not great in architectural merit. Few of the class are conspicuous successes. Some of them could hardly be less noteworthy—either inside or outside—than they are; and twenty of the largest buildings in our city might be destroyed without as much real loss to art as would result from the burning down of some little chapel in an Italian town. No doubt these very large buildings serve their mechanical purpose. But they might do that equally well if each of them displayed the best thoughts of five or six architects, and not of one only; and our suggestion is that a great competition should generally end in the appointment of several architects.

No doubt the proposal is startling. "We know already," our professional readers may say, "what happens where there are too many cooks. We have ourselves been sat upon by 'brother architects' too often: unsuccessful competitors, perhaps, who were raised to the rank of committeemen to recompense them for their wasted labors; and no good comes of it, nor is likely to come." But this is not at all our idea. A system in which every invention had to get itself approved by several rival inventors is one in which nothing worth making would ever be made. Suppose, however, that a general scheme for the building was first decided on, and that one section of that scheme was then turned over to one designer, and other sections to others, giving each of them, within wide limits, his own way in his own part. Might it not be possible in some such mode as that, to bring back the interest and individuality which make ancient buildings a joy for ever, and to get rid of the staleness, triteness, and repetition which pertain to "clerks' work," and the beating of a few ideas out thin enough to cover an extravagantly large surface?

If such a system were going to be acted on, the first problem would be to decide on the general plan. Now, there is a well-known case in point in which the promoters did provide the competitors with a ready-made plan, leaving them free to adopt it or to alter it as they pleased; and we believe we are correct in saying that the chosen architects, though they made one radical change in its arrangement, may yet be said, in the main, to have adopted it. Now, if this could be done once, something of a similar sort may be done again; and, if not, the preliminary stages of the competition might wisely, perhaps, be confined to sketches of planning and general grouping. But in that case, would it not be necessary to make very severe rules about style? Must not every competitor be compelled in that case to design—not in the architectural manner he liked best and knew most about, and commonly worked in, but in that of some period or some place which the promoters would have to impose on all the competitors alike? Really we do not see why. Have we not had enough uniformity? Are we not all sufficiently "tired of the 'ditto style,'" in which one hardly needs to look at more than one half of the a building because you know beforehand that other half will repeat it? And supposing several different architects were finally entrusted with different blocks of a great building, and supposing they *did* each work his block out in a style more or less unlike the rest? This would be only to produce, contemporaneously, the same sort of variety and interest which lapse of time, and the coming of builder

after builder in long succession, give to so many of the most beautiful ancient buildings in the world. People have tried, from age to age, to carry out uniformity of style in their architecture. But Time will have none of it; and, after all, Time manages men's work better than they could manage it themselves.

Lastly, the appointment of several architects in such great competitions would diffuse over a wider area those gleams of sunshine which are now concentrated in a very few spots, as if by a burning-glass. Most of the profession, however deserving, live and die in the cold shade, while a few individuals, "dark with excess of light," get more to do than any man can accomplish at his best. Is it not worth considering whether both architecture and architects might not gain if a great building once more contained, as such buildings once did, the best of many men's ideas, instead of the thoughts of only one, who must be working always at high pressure, and wearing himself out prematurely—body and mind?

RESTRAINT AND ENTHUSIASM.

H. R. GILLESPIE.

IT was very truly said at one of the Institute meetings recently that the future of architecture is, and always has been, in the hands of the younger men. All the same, this saying should not be pushed too far, for the young men are greatly influenced by their seniors. Youth is the period of hero-worship, and the ideas which a young man then imbibes, and subsequently develops in after life, depend to a great extent upon the selection of a hero. Occasionally youth breaks away, and with extreme enthusiasm goes off hotfoot upon some wrong scent, eventually, like lads in a game of "hare and hounds," having but to try back and, with loss of energy, again to seek the true scent and follow the right path. This was done in the early days of the Gothic Revival; but some of the early enthusiasts of that time never discovered their mistake, and it was left for the following generation to hark back. They were really enthusiastic, and produced the work of enthusiasts, or, rather, of enthusiastic amateurs, who mistook the overlying brilliant dress for the sound underlying body, and constructed their ornament, instead of ornamenting their construction. How far astray they went, and how ignorant they were of their straying may be recognized from the very title of one of the books which had an enormous circulation thirty years ago, and still sells largely amongst dilettanti—the well-known "A. B. C. of the Gothic Architecture," whose author himself was, as we now think, entirely ignorant of the Gothic alphabet—ignorant even of the fact that Gothic architecture is essentially an elaborate construction of concentrated thrusts and scientifically arranged resistances thereto. His idea was that Gothic architecture was synonymous with that of the pointed arch, and so persistently has this error remained with us that only a few days ago the pointed arch was referred to in a serious paper as the sign-manual of the Gothic style. Thus the buildings of the so-called "Gothic Revival" were frequently only Gothic in appearance and similitude. The underlying principles of true Gothic work were either misapplied or ignored. Consequently, there was no real vitality in such a revival of the style; it was a mere passing vogue, like that of the introduction of long feathers into ladies' hats, and in due course it went the way of all such evanescent fashions.



THE FISH RESIDENCE, BROOKLINE, MASS.

Winslow & Bigelow, Architects.

More recently we have seen the Queen Anne craze—the architectural equivalent of the cult of the sunflower and the lily in art, with its pseudo-Dutch treatment of domestic buildings; and this has been since replaced by the school of the Simple Life, which once more evoked much enthusiasm. It was a school composed of youthful dreamers, who are only now reaching middle life and beginning to understand that they were not entirely right—that, in fact, they were following a false scent as much as were the early leaders of the “Gothic Revival.” Their cry was that we should go back to first principles and make everything as simple and as plain as possible, showing the bare skeleton of our work and scarcely clothing it at all, except by applying such decoration as paint and enamel would afford in low tone, and showing moldings which were called suitable mainly because they were eccentric. We have now learnt that this form of simplicity is remarkably expensive, and that it is not in reality simplicity at all, but the mere aping of it. Those who habbled most about it were generally men of some artistic instinct, but very little architectural training, who might (and often did) introduce a cymatium of extraordinary projection simply because they did not know the value of a corora, which useful member was as often as not omitted. This cult of the over-Simple, which is fortunately dying out already, rarely found followers amongst those who understood the basis of historical design, or who had in any way troubled to comprehend how the everlasting difficulties of constructing with simplicity and truth had been overcome from time immemorial. The cult was, in fact, a sign of the impatience of youthful enthusiasts; who, artists to their finger-tips, tried to produce beautiful work before they had

learned the first principles of fitness. In their extreme impatience they threw over, as they thought, all the “hamper” of the past, while in fact they were merely neglecting to learn by the experience of those who had preceded them. Exuberant enthusiasm of this sort needs to be checked as severely as a lazy man needs goading.

In more important architectural works, there are at the present time many signs that another false scent is being followed. The cry of the moment is for “English” work, by which is meant the Renaissance of the Georgian period, with the addition of certain modern eccentricities which are highly unconstructional, such as the utilization of curved pediments as weight-carrying arches, the introduction of long keystones carried through entablatures and pediments and the breaking of entablatures lines for no more important reason than the unnecessary elongation of a window; while heavy swags and bold sculpture are introduced in impossible places, and ornament is stuck on which does not naturally grow out of the design. All the most debased Renaissance features are being adopted by those who are following the latest craze.

Progress there must be and there will be, and it is largely to the enthusiasm of the young that progress is due. On the other hand, true progress is only made by basing the new upon the old, by developing rather than consciously originating, by avoiding eccentricity by deliberate restraint. There must be sound knowledge, the result of years of careful systematic work, giving security that the artistic genius should not carry things too far. Even when we moderners have a modern material to contend with, unknown to the great workers of Classic or Gothic

days, we may yet learn from them that the essential construction must be the basis of design and be content to develop new forms gradually and with infinite pains from the old ones. The dangers of the moment are twofold—those of ignorance, and those of uncontrolled enthusiasm. It is at such institutions as the Architectural Associations where the ignorance can best be corrected and the enthusiasm curbed. Once, however, the young men thoroughly learn the basis of their art, their enthusiasm may well be viewed tolerantly. Rubbing shoulders with one another as they do in the schools, keeping up the friendships established there in after-life, talking freely to one another and criticising one another and assisting to develop one another, they are not likely to go far astray, and if all over the country our students could be as well trained as are the young men in the day and evening schools of such bodies, we should have little fear of the architecture of that twentieth century which has scarcely yet opened.

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THE CLAPP RESIDENCE, DEDHAM, MASS.

F. C. Brown, Architect.

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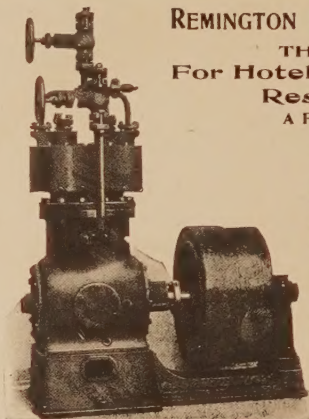
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